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FARM WOMEN LOOKING FORWARD

Radio talk by Madge J. Reese, Extension Service. Delivered during
Land-Grant College Radio Hour, April 18, 1934.

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When we look at Bryant Baker's statue "Pioneer Woman" at Ponca City, Oklahoma, we are impressed with the vigor, courage, and hope of the pioneer woman as she sets forth to meet whatever lies ahead. Equipped with her bundle, her Bible and her son at her side, the promise of the future, she looks upon the world with resolution and pride. A few of these early pioneer women still live in the far West. When asked about the hardships of the early day they say they did not think of the experiences as hardships but as difficulties to conquer, as trials to overcome. We learn from these splendid women if one stands difficulties bravely that there is as much satisfaction in looking back to difficulties as there is in looking back to joy.

The same "forward" spirit was expressed recently by a ranch woman of South Dakota who has lived 30 years in the open country. She says that there are hardships everywhere and they are no worse on the farm than elsewhere. When farmers lose their crops or their cattle, they do not climb windmills and jump off because they are not alone in their troubles. The farmer's wife can not escape knowing of crop failures, cholera plagues, or T.B. in the milk herd. The South Dakota ranch woman further says that the farmer has quietness about him and a measure of security. It is encouragement from the farm woman that saves the day for many a farm family when times are hard and trying.

With this same unflagging zeal the farm women of the South are lending a helping-hand in the Agricultural "Adjustment by taking the lead in the Live-at-Home Program. More than this in some communities the women organize and manage cooperative club or curb markets thereby increasing the farm income. More home improvements and more satisfactory living is the result. In one cooperative market in Maryland 87 women did \$100,000 worth of business in 1933. The gross sales of farm women's marketing in North Carolina in 1933 were \$404,652 through 29 curb markets and other cooperative enterprises.

One of the most hopeful things in rural life today is the high-spirited refusal of many farm women to resign themselves wholly to dull routine of daily tasks. They have the desire to grow, to keep on learning. They have come to the full recognition of the fact, schooling may end at an early age but that education goes on for life, that education is a product of all our experiences mixed and seasoned with life itself. How does the modern farm woman satisfy this desire? She reads the bulletins and circulars distributed by the Extension Service as well as books, newspapers, and magazines. She listens in on radio programs. When she goes to home demonstration meetings and to the leaders' training meetings, she exchanges ideas with other women. Taking part in community activities is a worth-while experience. Farm women also participate in garden and home improvement tours, attend recreational camps and in many other ways gain knowledge and inspiration. All this results in better and happier living for the whole family as some of the learning becomes vital in successful expression or demonstration within the home itself.

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What a wealth of learning the home demonstration work offers to the women of rural communities! I am going to list for you the different phases in one county home demonstration program - that for Riverside County, California. These phases are presented largely at the regular home demonstration meetings or at the project leaders' training meetings. Food and Nutrition - vegetable plate menus, meat cookery, yeast breads, cheese making and home canning, nutrition at low cost, the serving of meals, canning exhibits at fairs, frozen desserts and fruit juices for summer, school lunches. In the Clothing Program - making of the cotton dress costing one dollar, the renovation of hats, moth control, dry cleaning and dyeing of clothing at home, and the study of feet and shoes. Home Furnishing and Improvement - better buying of bedding, making of hook rugs and quilts, upholstering and refinishing old furniture, remodeling and building plans for farm houses, and the improvement of home grounds. Home Management - household accounts, laundry methods and removal of stains. Please keep in mind that this program carries much in applied science and art. In the food preparation phases the latest authoritative scientific information as it applies to good nutrition and health for both adults and children, is presented in simple understandable language. In clothing and house furnishing the women find the study of color harmony, line, design, selection of materials, good pictures, and other art furnishings very fascinating. Also there is much that is social and neighborly in the program as organized recreation has its place at meetings and a cooperative spirit prevails in all community activities.

Last year at least 900,000 farm women actively participated in similar home demonstration programs, each planned to meet the needs of the particular locality. Several times that number were benefited by the various Extension Service activities. Yes, farm women will keep on learning. They will preserve the best of the present and courageously strive for something better. They will face the sunrise with assurance. Ever Looking Forward.